

**THE EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION IN WHICH AN EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OR PRIVILEGE IS CLAIMED ARE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:**

- 5        1. A method of cryogenic treatment of tungsten carbide containing cobalt, comprising the steps of:  
            pre-treating tungsten carbide containing cobalt with microwave sintering, thereby changing the properties of the tungsten carbide;
- 10      lowering the temperature of the microwave sintered tungsten carbide gradually to cryogenic levels; and  
            raising the temperature of the microwave sintered tungsten carbide gradually back to ambient temperatures.
- 15      2. The method as defined in Claim 1, in which the microwave sintered tungsten carbide is held at cryogenic levels to permit cryogenic penetration into the microwave sintered tungsten carbide, prior to the raising of the microwave sintered tungsten carbide back to ambient temperatures.